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ABSTRACT

A 1990 Task Force report outlined the problem of the high dropout rate (40-60 percent) among Idaho's Hispanic-American students. This follow-up report presents state goals related to preventing Hispanic students from dropping out and makes specific recommendations to accomplish each goal. State-level goals are strong leadership, adequate funding, and enduring commitment to meeting the educational needs of Hispanic students. In the preschool category, the Task Force's goal is to provide a preschool program that will give Hispanic children a "head start" toward kindergarten. Goals for elementary and secondary schools include providing an educational environment conducive to success without damaging Hispanic children's self-esteem, providing a relevant curriculum that promotes cooperation and collaboration, ensuring cultural awareness and sensitivity among teachers and other school personnel, providing positive academic and vocational options for career development, and employing Hispanic role models at all staff levels. Other goals involve developing comprehensive, relevant guidance and counseling programs; encouraging involvement and active participation by Hispanic parents, families, and communities; eliminating bias and discrimination in schools and communities; increasing recruitment and graduation rates of Hispanic students in Idaho's colleges and universities; and increasing Hispanic faculty and administrators in higher education. (SV)

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REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON HISPANIC EDUCATION
State of Idaho Board of Education
January 18, 1991

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is a continuation and expansion of the work begun in Hispanic Youth -- Dropout Prevention, the 1990 report compiled by the State Board of Education's Task Force on the Participation of Hispanic Students in Vocational Education Programs.

The current report also incorporates recommendations from Achieving Campus Diversity -- Policies for Change, the report of the Education Commission of the States' National Task Force for Minority Achievement in Higher Education.

INTRODUCTION

Idaho's Hispanic young people continue to drop out of high school at a rate of 40 to 60 percent. This report, commissioned by the State Board of Education, is an attempt to address that problem, not only as a matter of fairness to Hispanic students, but of economic necessity for Idaho.

During the next decade, Idaho's Hispanic population is expected to double. Two-thirds of the new entrants into the work force will be either minorities or women. At the same time, a majority of all new jobs will require postsecondary education. Idaho can no longer afford to let Hispanic children fall through cracks in its education system.

The Task Force on Hispanic Education is not alone in recognizing the urgency of the problem. A variety of innovative initiatives have already been set in motion by local school districts, the State Department of Education, the State Division of Vocational Education, the Idaho Human Rights Commission, our public colleges and universities, the Hispanic Commission and various Hispanic organizations.

Some of the Task Force recommendations build on these ongoing efforts. We want to reproduce their successes in other schools and colleges. The remaining recommendations propose initiatives to fill the many gaps that have not yet been addressed. Our goal is to apply the best educational strategies consistently in every Idaho school, college and university to give every Hispanic student the chance for a quality education.

Recommendations are presented in the following categories:

- Statewide Leadership
- Preschool Programs
- Kindergarten through Grade 12
 - School Improvements
 - Guidance and Counseling
 - Community/Parental/Family Involvement
 - Prejudice/Discrimination
- Higher Education

These recommendations cannot be carried out by educators acting alone. Educators must have the support of the Governor, Legislature and taxpayers. All Idahoans must fight racial discrimination, which contributes to failure in our schools. Idaho business and industry must strive to bring Hispanics into every corner of the work force. Hispanics must examine and address the barriers their culture creates between young people and a quality education.

Although this report addresses specific Hispanic education issues, it provides for the enrichment of all Idaho children. As Hispanic kindergartners learn English, they can help other kindergartners learn a foreign language, an invaluable skill in our global economy. If given the chance, Hispanic children will also help their classmates better understand another culture.

Idaho's Hispanic community is an untapped economic and cultural resource. This report is another step toward realizing the potential of that resource and helping Hispanic children realize their personal ambitions.

STATEWIDE LEADERSHIP

Most of the recommendations in this report must be carried out at the local level or on college and university campuses. However, achieving the Task Force's long-range goals will require strong leadership at the state level.

GOAL

Ensure a strong and enduring commitment to meeting the education needs of the Hispanic community throughout Idaho.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Hire qualified professionals in positions of sufficient authority in the State Department of Education and Office of the State Board of Education to ensure that all Task Force recommendations are implemented and monitored.

Who: State Board of Education
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

2. Develop an action plan based on Task Force recommendations. The plan should indicate who will carry out each recommendation and the completion date.

Who: State Board of Education

3. Maintain the Task Force to review and monitor implementation of its recommendations.

Who: State Board of Education

4. Seek adequate funding to ensure implementation of Task Force recommendations.

Who: State Board of Education
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Governor
Legislators
Task Force on Hispanic Education
Hispanic Community

5. Make implementation of Task Force recommendations part of the criteria on which public school accreditation is based.

Who: State Board of Education

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

When Hispanic youths drop out of high school, the causes often lie in experiences they had before they started kindergarten or first grade. Any plan to improve Hispanic education must begin by addressing the needs of children in their formative, preschool years.

GOAL

Provide a preschool program designed to put Hispanic children on an equal footing with other students when they begin kindergarten.

RECOMMENDATION

Establish and fund a preschool program modeled after Head Start to serve Hispanic parents and children who are not covered by the federally funded Head Start program.

Who: State Superintendent of Public Instruction
State Board of Education
Governor
Legislature

KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12

I. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

Hispanic children drop out of Idaho schools for a variety of reasons, some related to language and culture, some to economic difficulties, others to racial prejudice and discrimination. School trustees, administrators and teachers cannot address these issues alone, but they must play a key role. Most important, they must strive to understand the special needs of Hispanic students, then shape thoughtful programs to meet those needs.

GOALS

1. Provide an educational environment in which every Hispanic student succeeds at his or her own rate of progress without risking self-esteem.
2. Provide a curriculum that is relevant to the problems and issues Hispanic youth and their families face today and will face in the near future.
3. Provide a curriculum that teaches and promotes family-like cooperation and collaboration in facing and working with the above issues.
4. Ensure that instructional, guidance, and administrative staff are sensitive to Hispanic culture and language and work constructively with Hispanic students and patrons.
5. Assess academic and vocational education programs to ensure they are perceived as positive options for career development of Hispanic students.
6. Employ Hispanic role models at all staff levels so that Hispanic students are encouraged to succeed and remain in school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Plan and regularly offer a cultural awareness in-service training program for all certified and non-certified school personnel.

Who: Superintendents
Principals
State Department of Education

2. Require that at least one academic hour of the six hours required for teacher recertification be in cultural awareness training. In school districts with a Hispanic student population of 5 percent or more, the training should be in Hispanic cultural awareness.

Who: State Board of Education

3. Provide for tutoring of younger students by high school students, thereby promoting academic achievement through the influence of positive role models.

Who: Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors
Home School Coordinators
Parent-Teacher Organizations
Special Needs Coordinators

4. Hire bilingual/Hispanic staff as positions open so that the ethnic make-up of the staff more closely reflects the ethnic make-up of the community and student population.

Who: Superintendents
Local School Boards
Principals

5. Provide interpreters for parent-teacher conferences and other occasions when language barriers prevent communication.

Who: Superintendents
Local School Boards
Principals

6. Establish tutoring centers and learning labs to accelerate learning.

Who: Superintendents
Local School Boards
Principals
Idaho Migrant Council
Other Community-Based Organizations

7. Develop and publicize alternative ways for migrant students to get credit (for example, Saturday school and the credit accrual method), allowing them to stay in school and comply with the 90 percent attendance rule.

Who: Superintendents
Local School Boards
Principals
Teachers
Counselors
Parents
Home-School Coordinators

8. Educate Hispanic students and families about the 90 percent attendance rule, the rationale for it, how it works, and alternatives to it.

Who: Superintendents
Local School Boards
Principals
Teachers
Counselors
Parents
Home-School Coordinators

9. Implement a planned program to raise self-esteem among at-risk students.

Who: Superintendents
Local School Boards
Principals
Teachers
Counselors
Parents

10. Concentrate on serving students in mainstream regular classrooms instead of separate pullout programs; integrate not separate.

Who: Superintendents
Local School Boards
Principals
Teachers
Counselors
Parents

11. Amend accreditation requirements for Idaho secondary schools to require that all secondary schools with a Hispanic student population of 5 percent or more offer at least three full years of instruction in Spanish.

Who: State Board of Education

12. Require the introduction and integration of foreign language instruction beginning in kindergarten. By third grade, require 30 minutes of daily instruction in a foreign language through grade six. In school districts with a Hispanic student

population of 5 percent or more, that language should be Spanish.

Who: State Board of Education
Superintendents
Local School Boards
Principals
Teachers
Counselors

13. Request \$1 million from the Legislature to provide school districts with matching grants to extend language development services, both Spanish and English, for Hispanic students (i.e., Spanish grammar for Spanish speakers and English as a Second Language classes taught by trained, certified teachers for students with limited proficiency in English).

Who: State Board of Education
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Governor
Task Force on Hispanic Education
Legislators

14. Require local school districts to develop career development plans for Hispanic certified and non-certified personnel. Encourage the districts to provide financial incentives and other assistance as part of the plans.

Who: State Board of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents

15. In school districts with a Hispanic population of 5 percent or more, include Hispanic parents and students on the 10-year evaluation-of-accreditation team.

Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents

16. Require each school district with a Hispanic population greater than 5 percent to develop a detailed Hispanic parent-involvement plan that promotes open and continuous communication between parents, teachers and school administrators. Ensure that school principals chair and are actively involved with the Hispanic parent advisory committees.

- a. As part of the parent involvement plan, require schools to survey Hispanic parents and students each year regarding:

- The adequacy of information provided students and parents on educational programs and opportunities for Hispanic students.
 - Access to educational programs and opportunities for Hispanic students.
- b. Ask the State Department of Education to monitor implementation of the parent involvement plan to ensure compliance.
- c. Develop talk shows on Spanish-language radio and television to promote improved education for Hispanic students.
- Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
17. Offer latch-key or "playing and learning under supervision" (PLUS) programs for Hispanic and other children as part of after school activities.
- Who: Governor
Legislature
State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
18. Develop a job description, obtain state funding and hire bilingual/bicultural (English/Spanish) home-school coordinators to work in local school districts to:
- a. Facilitate the transition of preschool children and their parents into the public school system.
- b. Promote and facilitate continuing communication between the school system -- especially top administrators -- and Hispanic parents and students.
- Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals

19. Increase the status and respect given to Hispanic public school personnel without college degrees by other school personnel as a means to increase respect for these individuals in the eyes of the children for whom they serve as role models.

- a. Establish ongoing staff development programs in school districts that will lead to certification for Hispanic personnel without college degrees. Base the programs on the national child development associate (CDA) model.
- b. Provide incremental salary increases for Hispanic school personnel without college degrees based on pre-degree educational progress and Spanish-speaking ability.

Who: Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors
Other School Staff

20. Provide developmentally appropriate, individualized assessment for all students, including Hispanics. Begin this process early and repeat the assessment on a regular basis throughout school careers. Provide instruction for every student based on the assessments and each student's learning style.

Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors

21. Develop and implement anti-bias curricula at all levels.

Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors

II. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Guidance and counseling play a critical role in modern schools. All too often, students have no place to turn for sound advice on how to deal with personal and educational problems. A well-trained counselor can provide that sound advice.

Currently, Idaho schools suffer from a severe shortage of counselors. That shortage hurts all students, but is particularly harmful to Hispanic students with special needs.

GOAL

Develop comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in Idaho schools that will meet the career, educational, personal and social needs of Hispanic students and their families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implement the Idaho Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program Model adopted by the State Board of Education.

Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors

2. Seek out and hire bilingual/bicultural (Spanish/English) counselors.

Who: Superintendent
Principals

3. Develop additional peer counseling programs such as Natural Helpers.

Who: Principals
Teachers
Counselors

4. Provide cultural awareness training to school counselors. In schools with a Hispanic student population of 5 percent or more, the training should be in Hispanic cultural awareness.

Who: State Division of Vocational Education
State Department of Education
Idaho Association on Career Development
Idaho School Counselors Association
Idaho Hispanic Commission
Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors

5. Ensure that Hispanic cultural awareness is incorporated into counselor education programs.

Who: State Division of Vocational Education
State Department of Education
College and University Counselor Education Programs

6. Provide parenting education to Hispanic families.

Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
State Division of Vocational Education
Department of Health and Welfare
Local School Boards
Idaho Migrant Council
Other Community-Based Organizations

7. Provide family counseling.

Who: Home-school coordinators
Idaho Migrant Council
Community-Based Organizations

8. Provide increased career awareness through experience-based career education, volunteering and use of the Career Information System.

Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Division of Vocational Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors

9. Provide support groups and/or counseling for students suffering from physical, mental or substance abuse.

Who: Department of Health and Welfare
Idaho Migrant Council
Other Community-Based Organizations

10. Help Hispanic students identify potential employers, Job Service contacts, job opportunities and requirements.

Who: Work Place Coordinators
Counselors
Job Service Counselors

11. Identify and provide students with information on agencies and counselors that meet special needs (e.g., alternative schools, drug and alcohol counseling, handicapped education, etc.).

Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Counselors

12. Identify potential sources of financial aid and scholarships, improve access to such information and provide assistance with applications.

Who: State Board of Education
State Department of Education
State Division of Vocational Education Career
Information System
Public School Counselors
College and University Financial Aid Counselors
Home-School Coordinators

III. COMMUNITY/PARENTAL/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

While much of the burden of improving Hispanic education must fall on schools, they cannot succeed without the support and active participation of parents, family and community. Solving the problems of Hispanic education will depend largely on how quickly and effectively educators at all levels join forces with parents and the Hispanic community to achieve common goals.

GOAL

Encourage active participation of Hispanic community leaders, organizations and Hispanic parents/families in the educational process and career planning of their children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for parents.

- a. Increase state funding for Adult Basic Education -- which covers a variety of subjects including ESL -- from \$100,000 per year to \$600,000 or more per year.
- b. Provide televised ESL classes via the State Board of Education's telecommunications system.

Who: Governor
Legislature
State Board of Education
State Department of Education
Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors

2. Prepare school information for students and parents in Spanish as well as English when necessary.

Who: Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Teachers
Counselors

3. Establish Parent/Student Learning Centers.

Who: Local School Boards
Superintendents
Principals
Private Industry Councils
Idaho Migrant Council
State Department of Education

4. Provide more flexibility in the time and locale of parent/teacher conferences.

Who: Principals
Teachers

5. Develop role model and tutorial programs for youth.

Who: Private Industry Councils
Community-Based Organizations
Idaho Hispanic Commission
Counselors

6. Provide development training and technical assistance to create new Hispanic, school-related groups and support existing groups.

Who: State Department of Education
Idaho Association of School Administrators
State Division of Vocational Education
Idaho Hispanic Commission

IV. PREJUDICE/DISCRIMINATION

Racial prejudice and discrimination persist in many corners of Idaho society, including its schools. Our state will never provide truly equal opportunity for all its citizens until we erase such bigotry.

GOAL

Eliminate prejudice and bigotry in our schools and communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop and implement a Cultural Awareness Training Model for certified and non-certified personnel, parent groups, students and the community.

Who: Interface Network
Idaho Education Association
Idaho Vocational Association
Idaho Migrant Council
PTAs and PTOs
Migrant Education Program Parent Advisory Committee

2. Develop strategies and use available resources to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in schools and communities.

Who: Idaho Education Association Minority Affairs Committee
State Human Rights Commission
Task Force on Malicious Harassment
Regional Office of Civil Rights
Guidance and Counseling Associations
Division of Vocational Education
State Department of Education
Business and Industry
Department of Employment
Private Industry Councils
Idaho Migrant Council
Other Community-Based Organizations
Migrant Education Program Parent Advisory Committee

3. Establish a statewide computer data base to monitor public school enrollment, progress, graduation rates, etc. by ethnicity.

Who: State Department of Education

4. Prepare a comprehensive report on the impact of the state's 90 percent attendance requirement on Hispanic students.

Who: State Board of Education

HIGHER EDUCATION

Currently, far too many Hispanic students leave the education system before the end of high school. Unfortunately, even those who complete high school may find barriers to entering a college or university. For many it is money. For some it is fear of the unknown; neither their parents, family nor friends have attended college.

In a world where a majority of new jobs require postsecondary education, providing equal opportunity for all means breaking down those barriers to higher education.

GOALS

1. Increase recruitment and graduation rates of Hispanic students in Idaho's colleges and universities.
2. Increase the number of Hispanic faculty and administrative/professional staff at Idaho's colleges and universities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop programs to increase Hispanic participation in higher education.
 - a. Develop incentives for Hispanic students to participate in higher education in Idaho.
 - Establish a Hispanic scholarship program to improve recruitment and graduation rates of Hispanics at Idaho colleges and universities.
 - Develop incentives for Hispanic students to pursue and complete graduate study.
 - b. Support minority faculty and staff in conducting research, completing terminal degrees, etc., to further career development and job market competitiveness.
 - c. Support the Statewide Plan for Higher Education, which includes goals that address the need to improve minority access, recruitment, retention, achievement and graduation rates at Idaho colleges and universities.
 - Include Hispanics on the planning committee established to carry out these goals.
 - Seek Hispanic input throughout the planning process.

d. Require that each public college and university develop an action plan ensuring Hispanic access, recruitment, retention, achievement and graduation.

- Require that each institutional action plan be approved by the State Board of Education.
- Require that each institutional action plan be reviewed by the Board annually.
- Provide adequate funding to implement the institutional action plans.
- Expand the pool of well-prepared Hispanic students by reaching out to communicate with and recruit public school students beginning no later than seventh grade.

e. Require that each institution develop a tracking system to follow each individual Hispanic student.

Who: State Board of Education
College and University Presidents

2. Evaluate the institutional climate on campus to ensure a positive and supportive environment for Hispanic students.

- a. Survey perceptions of administration, faculty, staff and students toward Hispanics.
- b. Review the history of hiring, retention and promotion of Hispanic administrators, faculty and staff to increase representation.
- c. Evaluate the effectiveness and enforcement of each institution's racial harassment policy.
- d. Promote the appointment of Hispanic personnel to leadership roles and committees, i.e., deans, chairs, presidents and seats on advisory committees.
- e. Develop and maintain an effective Hispanic support system and network that includes, but is not limited to:
 - Mentoring programs.
 - Minority faculty advisors.
 - Minority program coordinators.
 - Minority career/academic placement counselors.
- f. Provide anti-bias training for faculty and staff.

Who: State Board of Education
College and University Presidents

3. Develop and regularly evaluate curricula that embrace cultural pluralism and are responsive to the needs of Hispanic students. Require coursework in the study of cultural diversity.

Who: State Board of Education
College and University Presidents

4. Ensure that Hispanic cultural awareness training is incorporated into teacher education programs. Require that by 1995 all teacher education programs require at least three credit hours of Hispanic cultural awareness training.

Who: State Board of Education
College and University Presidents

5. Require Idaho's public college and universities to include foreign language study as part of the General Education Requirements (core curriculum).

Who: State Board of Education

6. Use progress in meeting institutional goals for minority achievement as a criterion in presidential evaluations.

Who: State Board of Education
Executive Director of the State Board of Education

7. Link college and university funding to progress toward statewide goals for minority participation and achievement.

Who: State Board of Education

8. Support and fund programs to recruit more minority faculty.

Who: State Board of Education
College and University Presidents

MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE ON HISPANIC EDUCATION

Sam Byrd
SW Idaho Private Industry
Boise, Idaho

Virginia Creager
EG&G Idaho, Inc.
Idaho Falls, Idaho

John Billetz, Principal
Burley Senior High School
Burley, Idaho

Shirley Vendrell
Nampa Senior High School
Nampa, Idaho

Debbie Elizondo
Marsing Elementary School
Marsing, Idaho

Ofelia Alvarado
Idaho Migrant Council
Caldwell, Idaho

Francie Katsilomites
President, Image de Idaho
Boise, Idaho

David Pena
ASUI, University of Moscow
Moscow, Idaho

Anna M. Moczygemba
Associate Director
High School Equivalency Program
Boise State University
Boise, Idaho

Barbara Morgan
Administrative Assistant
U.S. Forest Service
Boise, Idaho

Jay R. Fuhriman, Associate Professor
Boise State University
Boise, Idaho

George Alvarez
Past President
State Board of Education
Boise, Idaho

Daniel Rodriguez
Idaho Dept. of Employment
Pocatello, Idaho

Gus Hein
Department of Education
Boise, Idaho

Sergio Gutierrez
Idaho Legal Aid
Caldwell, Idaho

Sally Pena
Boise, Idaho